



## Iowa Medicaid Disease Management Program

[www.ime.state.ia.us](http://www.ime.state.ia.us)

1-515-256-4606 (in the Des Moines Area)

1-800-338-8366 (outside of the Des Moines Area)

### Controlling High Blood Pressure

**High blood pressure** (hypertension) is called the silent killer. This is because many people who have it don't know it. Normal blood pressure is less than 120/80. Know your blood pressure and remember to check it regularly. Doing so can save your life. Here are some things you can do to help control your blood pressure.

#### Choose heart-healthy foods

- Select low-salt, low-fat foods.
- Limit canned, dried, cured, packaged, and fast foods. These can contain a lot of salt.
- Eat 8–10 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Choose lean meats, fish, or chicken.
- Eat whole-grain pasta, brown rice, and beans.
- Eat 2–3 servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy products
- Ask your doctor about the DASH eating plan. This plan helps reduce blood pressure.



#### Maintain a healthy weight

- Ask your healthcare provider how many calories to eat a day. Then stick to that number.
- Ask your healthcare provider what weight range is healthiest for you. If you are overweight, weight loss of only 10 lbs can help lower blood pressure.
- Limit snacks and sweets.
- Get regular exercise.

#### Get up and get active

- Choose activities you enjoy. Find ones you can do with friends or family.
- Park farther away from building entrances and use stairs instead of the elevator.
- When you can, walk or bike instead of driving.
- Rake leaves, garden, or do household repairs.
- Be active for at least 30 minutes a day, most days of the week.



#### Manage stress

- Make time to relax and enjoy life. Find time to laugh.
- Visit with family and friends, and keep up with hobbies.

#### Limit alcohol and quit smoking

- Men: Have no more than 2 drinks per day.
- Women: Have no more than 1 drink per day.
- Talk with your healthcare provider about quitting smoking. Smoking increases your risk for heart disease and stroke. Ask about local or community programs that can help.

#### Medications

If lifestyle changes aren't enough, your healthcare provider may prescribe high blood pressure medicine. Take all medications as prescribed.